

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-20 SPC-03 NSC-07 SSO-00

NSCE-00 INR-10 INRE-00 SAM-01 EB-11 RSC-01 DRC-01

/108 W

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O R 151959Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1379

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY KWUAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1091

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR US MO AG ENRG

SUBJ: GOM FOREIGN MINISTER ON OIL EMBARGO AND US-EUROPEAN
RELATIONS

FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA ASKED ME TO CALL ON HIM
MARCH 15 AND MADE FOLLOWING PRESENTATION: THE CONFLICT
BETWEEN US AND EUROPE REGARDING EUROPEAN-ARAB MEETING
HAD GIVEN AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ARAB COUNTRIES IMPRES-
SION, OR APPREHENSION, THAT THESE DIFFERENCES MIGHT
ALSO HAVE RESULTED IN ILL FEELINGS BETWEEN US AND THE
ARAB COUNTRIES. AS TO US-EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES, FOREIGN
MINISTER SAID HE HAD NOTHING TO SAY, AS THAT WAS NOT
HIS AFFAIR. BUT HE WANTED TO ASSURE ME, AND, HE SAID,
HE WAS SPEAKING NOT ONLY FOR MOROCCO, THAT THE ARABS
HIGHLY APPRECIATE THE CONTRIBUTION WHICH THE US GOVERN-
MENT IS MAKING TO PEACE. THIS IS A REAL ATTEMPT ON THE
PART OF THE US TO ARRIVE AT A LASTING AND AIR RESOLU-
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TION AND TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT IN A MANNER WHOSE

OUTLINES WE THINK WE CAN ALREADY SEE. THE NEFARIOUS FRENCH POLICY IS, AFTER ALL, ONE THAT IS WELL KNOWN FOR FIFTEEN YEARS AND IS A HANDICAP AND A NUISANCE. WHAT ARABS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT IS THAT CONFLICT BETWEEN THE US AND EUROPE SEEMS TO BE GETTING WORSE ON EVE OF THE EUROPE-ARAB MEETING AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES ARE ANXIOUS THAT THEIR POSITION NOT BE MISUNDERSTOOD.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER HAD ASKED MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR SENOSSI TO GET READIN ON THIS MATTER IN WASHINGTON BUT HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT IN LAST 48 HOURS SENOSSI HAD BEEN TOO BUSY PREPARING FOR MOHAMED BENHIMA'S VISIT TO GET MUCH OUT OF DEPARTMENT. THEREFORE, FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD LIKE TO PLACE BEFORE USG THE DESIRABILITY OF CLARIFYING US ATTITUDE TOWARDS ARABS IN EUROPE-ARAB CONTEXT, I.E., TO REASSURE ARABS WE HAD NO HARD FEELINGS TOWARD THEM OVER THIS ISSUE. THIS SHOULD BE DONE EITHER VIA THE PRESS OR THROUGH ARAB EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON.

3. BENHIMA PARTICULARLY URGED THAT THIS BE DONE BEFORE MARCH 25, WHEN REGULAR SESSION OF ARAB LEAGUE WILL MEET IN TUNIS. HE SAID THAT SOME OF THE ARABS WANTED TO CANCEL THAT MEETING BUT THAT MOROCCO AND OTHERS HAVE INSISTED ON ITS BEING HELD IN ORDER TO SUPPORT NEW GOVERNMENT IN TUNIS AND GIVE IT GREATER VISIBILITY AND STRENGTH. BENHIMA SAID ARAB WORLD, AND CERTAINLY MOROCCO, SUPPORT MORE AND MORE THE RAPID ENDING OF THE OIL EMBARGO. HE SAID MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT HAD SENT 25 SEPARATE MESSAGES TO HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD IN A CONSTANT CAMPAIGN OF SUPPORT LIFTING OF EMBARGO. SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT WERE IN TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE US AND KUWAIT HAD ACCEPTED WITH SOME RESERVATIONS. THE OBSTACLE WAS ALGERIA, WHICH WAS SURPRISINGLY HOSTILE. HOWEVER, ON BASIS OF GOM CONVERSATIONS WITH ITS EMBASSIES AS OF MIDDAY TODAY, BENHIMA HAS IMPRESSION THINGS ARE GOING IN DIRECTION OF LIFTING OF EMBARGO. WHEN I ASKED FOR HIS INTERPRETATION OF ALGERIAN HOSTILITY, HE SAID ALGERIANS ALWAYS HAVE A DOCTRINAIRE POINT OF VIEW AND FEAR THAT GIVING IN WILL PUT THEM IN BAD LIGHT WITH PALESTINIANS, FOR WHOM ALGERIANS LIKE TO BE THE MAIN

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IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORTERS.
NEUMANN

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION PER S/S-O, MR. TWOHIE.

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